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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 4th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 66 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)(interpretation from Russian): Allow me at the outset, on behalf of the Soviet delegation, to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to your very important and responsible post at the present session of the General Assembly.

This year's session of the First Committee is taking place against a very special background. As mankind enters a period of peaceful development, it is ridding itself of increasingly redundant stockpiles of weapons. Soviet and United States intermediate-range nuclear missiles will soon be completely eliminated. An unprecedented Soviet-United States accord on substantial cuts in strategic offensive arms is in the offing. Europe is close to an agreement on drastic reductions in military capabilities and is ready to proceed in the near future to the development of fundamentally new principles for regional security that would no longer include a reliance on force.

Signs of positive change are becoming ever more apparent in other regions, where the trend towards dialogue and co-operation is continuing. A concept of new internationalism is forming in the collective mind of the world community. It is a concept calling for consensus, collective effort, the primacy of international law and the effective use of all multilateral mechanisms, both regional and universal, with the United Nations, of course, at the centre. The Soviet vision of a new United Nations in the post-confrontation world has been set out in a memorandum that was presented last week by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze.

However, it would be a mistake, of course, to paint today's world in radiant hues. In fact, it looks more like one of Rembrandt's paintings, which are exuberant and bright but at the same time sombre and dramatic, and which, most

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

important, portray reality in its true colours. Indeed, on the one hand, prospects are emerging for stable disarmament and for the political settlement of conflicts and contradictions. On the other hand, the unprovoked Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, which flagrantly violates the sovereignty of a United Nations Member State, serves as a dire warning that violence and war cannot yet be regarded as episodes of the tragic past and are still seen by some as instruments of policy.

This contradictory and as-yet-incomplete picture of today's world is a vivid reminder that the international community has come to a threshold beyond which it will be able to advance rapidly towards an entirely new world order. The Rubicon of irreversible disarmament has not yet been crossed. The Soviet Union and the United States, the trail-blazers of arms control, are now dramatically accelerating their pace.

READEX FICHE

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The talks in New York between Eduard Shevardnadze and James Baker have put Soviet-United States disarmament on the fast track. We regard the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to President Mikhail S. Gorbachev as a recognition of the role of our country, and indeed of that of our partners too, in the reduction of military arsenals. Talks may be on the fast track, but however powerful the locomotive, it will not gain full speed so long as the rest of the train is held back by inertia. The disarmament process must be globalized to include all types of weapons and to extend to all countries and regions.

The issue of global disarmament has been on the United Nations agenda for a number of years now. We have to our common credit a wealth of valuable initiatives and an abundance of resolutions. But ideas can truly become a part of the material world only when they - as Descartes put it - induce purposeful action.

We are convinced that those involved in today's multilateral disarmament must adopt a philosophy of action that calls for concrete measures and for the addition of a practical dimension to the basic understandings reached on a wide range of issues of military and political security by translating them into agreed legal documents.

The multilateral disarmament machinery is a powerful collection of modern hardware - as computer experts would say. But if these mechanisms are to function properly we must work together to rationalize their operation.

Such work has already begun in the United Nations Disarmament Commission. At this year's session the Commission demonstrated that the streamlining of its agenda, which has been cut down to the most relevant items, and the setting of deadlines for the consideration of particular items have given it a second wind and have significantly revived the interest of States in its work.

It is equally important that we proceed without delay to rationalization of the work of the First Committee. The Soviet delegation believes that we could

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agree to reduce the number of resolutions, to consider certain items once every two or three years, and to limit the general debate with a view to saving time for a more thorough negotiation of decisions to be adopted. We invite all delegations to join in an active exchange of views on how to rationalize the work of the First Committee, and we should like to see a consensus between States on this subject recorded in a resolution this session.

The Conference on Disarmament is in need of intensive therapy. I must state quite frankly that negotiations are too slow on the uptake, and in the Conference hall representatives spend too much time on lengthy discussions that sometimes bear little relevance to what is going on outside the Palais des Nations. It is high time we understood that disarmament diplomacy must not wait impassively for problems to overflow and force their way inside; it must prepare the ground well in advance for solutions. Least of all should it change course or slow down when the objective is within reach. The tentative efforts made this summer to increase the efficiency of the Conference must be pursued.

We strongly believe that rationalization is by no means tantamount to limiting the scope of multilateral disarmament. On the contrary, having dispensed with declaratory statements, polemics and empty, wordy resolutions, the United Nations could concentrate on its major objectives and take practical actions, even ones that might, at the outset, appear to be modest. To be sure, when we advocate what I might call reasonable sufficiency in new proposals and say that they should be more result-oriented, our remarks apply equally to our own delegation.

While adjustments are being made to the hardware, attention must be paid to the adequacy of the software. Programmes should be aimed at practical results and should be geared intrisically to achieving specific agreements. There is not a single area of disarmament that would not allow for a global programme of action tailored to a specific multilateral mechanism.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Javier Perez de Cuellar was absolutely right when, in his report on the activities of the Organization, he said:

"The doctrines which dominated military thought and planning throughout the decades following the Second World War have suddenly lost their relevance and applicability. Appropriate security structures need to be found to replace the adversarial strategies of the past." (A/45/1, pp. 17-18)

In modern inter-State relations there is no place for power rivalry or for the concept of war as a continuation of politics.

If war is being dismissed as an instrument of policy, it is only logical to make the next move and agree on parameters of reasonable defence sufficiency of military capabilities. This can be achieved through an extensive international dialogue aimed at making the military doctrines, and hence the military postures, of all States purely defensive in nature.

Such a dialogue has already become a fact of life in relations between Warsaw Treaty countries and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries. The structures of confrontation in the old world are gradually giving way to a common European home of co-operation and security. A continent that twice in its history was the arena of world war is now looking forward to an agreement on drastic reductions in conventional forces. The non-aggression declaration to be signed by the Warsaw Treaty countries and the NATO countries will finally make military confrontation in Europe a thing of the past.

Yet because the world today is whole and interdependent its security cannot be reliably ensured unless the demilitarization process is extended beyond the continent of Europe and unless mutually complementary efforts are made at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

To that end, it is necessary for us to make the best of the opportunities offered by regional approaches in order to eliminate the risk of war in countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America and to get regional organizations more actively involved in these efforts. It is at the regional level that early signs of hegemonistic tendencies are easiest to detect, and international efforts to counter such dangerous ambitions can be mobilized in good time.

The United Nations could become a focal point for promoting defence sufficiency on a global scale and stimulating regional efforts to this end. Last year a dialogue on defensive doctrines was initiated here. Making this dialogue more intensive and profound is an imperative of history. In our view, understanding in this area would be promoted by carrying out a special United Nations study on defensive doctrines. We urge everyone to support this proposal, and we request the Secretary-General to undertake such a study.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

As it happens, the Soviet Union and the United States are the countries that must lead the way in nuclear disarmament. This does not mean, however, that the rest of the world can be denied a creative role in shaping a new, non-nuclear security architecture, all the more so since a certain diversity of views actually exists on the subject.

The Soviet Union unequivocally shares the belief that only a complete elimination of nuclear weapons can guarantee lasting security to our civilization. We shall therefore seek further development and expansion of nuclear disarmament to include, in particular, tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and naval tactical nuclear arms. The talks which we have proposed on tactical nuclear weapons in Europe would initially be conducted between the Soviet Union and the United States, and could be joined later by other countries. The mandate for such talks should, in our view, cover ground-launched tactical missiles, nuclear artillery, nuclear-delivery aircraft, and the nuclear components of such systems.

We are familiar with the logic of those of our partners who tend to see nuclear weapons as a guarantee of their security. But even they do not deny that the existing nuclear arms stockpiles are excessive, and they would be prepared to reduce them. In this connection the concept of minimal nuclear deterrence ought to be given more careful consideration. We propose a discussion of specific parameters of minimal nuclear deterrence to be held at the United Nations or at the Conference on Disarmament.

Nobody would seriously expect the international community to be able to get rid of nuclear weapons overnight. Common sense suggests that only a step-by-step approach is possible here. The United Nations, seeking as it does to promote practical efforts, would do well to launch a dialogue on possible stages of nuclear disarmament. Such a useful exchange of views could rely, among other things, on

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the well-considered conclusions contained in the updated study on nuclear weapons by the group of United Nations experts chaired by Mrs. Theorin.

At the same time we could begin to discuss ways of shaping a political and legal system of transparent and verifiable deterrence which would eventually replace the model of security based on reciprocal deterrence by fear of nuclear arms.

A final transition from declarations to practical efforts in the nuclear sphere would be facilitated by a substantive discussion of a ban on the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. The General Assembly could give impetus to progress in this area by including in one of its resolutions a call for the elaboration at an early date of an international agreement on the cessation of production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes.

The Soviet Union, for its part, has already halted the production of enriched uranium and announced its plans to phase out all its reactors producing weapons-grade plutonium by the year 2000. We also attach major importance to the issue of nuclear material becoming available as a result of the implementation of nuclear-disarmament agreements. We understand the concern of public opinion that retaining such material leaves open the possibility that it might be recycled back into weapons. In order to preclude the use of that material for weapons purposes, it would be important to undertake a technical study of its potential peaceful uses and to develop an appropriate verification mechanism. In our view, it is also time we requested the International Atomic Energy Agency to proceed to an expert analysis of all these issues.

Global efforts to preserve and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation régime are clearly a high priority. Only through joint efforts and strong commitment on the part of all States can the creeping spread of the nuclear metastasis be prevented.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The Soviet Union will strongly support the non-proliferation Treaty, which must remain in effect until a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world becomes a reality. It can be superseded only by a comprehensive international treaty on preventing a rebirth of nuclear weapons after they have been completely eliminated from the face of the Earth.

We are not inclined to over-dramatize the fact that the Fourth Review Conference of the non-proliferation Treaty ended without a concluding document. The main result of the Conference, as we see it, is that the parties to the non-proliferation Treaty do not question the need to preserve it.

For our part, we consider to be inadmissible any attempts to blackmail or intimidate the world community in dealing with matters of nuclear non-proliferation. We feel just as strongly about the threat of chemical weapons and the proliferation of missiles, and favour a comprehensive approach to non-proliferation issues. Moreover, we believe that the international community should keep a close watch on countries that make determined efforts to build up the offensive capabilities of their armed forces.

The prohibition of nuclear testing is an important element in the non-proliferation and elimination of nuclear weapons. Humanity will never get rid of the "nuclear syndrome" unless such a ban is achieved. In this connection I wish to make it clear once again that the Soviet Union has been and remains a staunch supporter of an early prohibition on testing. Last year the Soviet Union reviewed its programme of nuclear testing. It reduced the number and yield of explosions, and has not conducted any tests since October 1989. In its 9 October 1990 appeal to parliaments and peoples of the world, the USSR Supreme Soviet emphasized that the Soviet Union is prepared to extend this 12-month pause in Soviet nuclear testing for ever, once and for all. For this to happen, it would be enough for the

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United States Government, either unilaterally or by mutual agreement, to discontinue its own nuclear-testing programmes.

Moscow and Washington have ratified the 1974 and 1976 threshold test-ban treaties. These documents set out procedures for seismic monitoring and on-site inspections that could well be used in a future verification mechanism of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. The ice has thus been broken and we call on the United States to agree without delay to new limitations with regard to the yield and number of tests as a step towards their complete cessation.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

A complete shut-down of nuclear test sites can be facilitated by a combination of bilateral and multilateral efforts. In this area, parallel actions are not only desirable, but essential. That is why the Soviet Union expects a great deal from the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban set up within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament; the General Assembly might wish to call for an intensification of the Ad Hoc Committee's work.

The Soviet Union wishes every success to the special Conference of States Parties to the 1963 Moscow Treaty, which is to address the question of extending the scope of the Treaty to underground testing. It is essential that the forum take place in a businesslike and non-confrontational atmosphere and that from the very outset it be geared as far as possible towards the joint formulation of mutually acceptable practical measures. For our part, we shall do the utmost to achieve this, and we expect other States to do the same.

Human survival or destruction - which is what the question of nuclear testing is about - cannot be left to diplomats, military experts or politicians to decide upon. The people and their elected representatives must have the final say. A world-wide parliamentary referendum on nuclear testing would give a clear answer to this problem, which we have so far been unable to resolve at the negotiating table. We urge the General Assembly to support the idea of a parliamentary referendum and to request the Secretary-General to act as the focal point in that regard. Moreover, we could set a deadline of 1 December 1990 for the submission of information on the referendum, and a special plenary meeting of the General Assembly could be held to consider that information.

Global efforts are needed today also to conclude the many years of work on a convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons. We are confident that the United Nations can make an important contribution to the

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universality of the future convention. More specifically, the General Assembly could call on States Members of the United Nations to announce their intention to become original parties to the convention and to declare whether or not they possess chemical weapons. A vote on such a resolution would show who is actually stalling the elimination of chemical weapons. It would be useful to hold a special meeting of the First Committee to inform States that are not participating in the negotiations of the progress of work in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and to give them an opportunity to express their views on the issues under discussion.

What else can be done to speed up the negotiating process in Geneva? We support the proposal to hold, in the first half of 1991, a meeting of the Conference on Disarmament at the level of foreign ministers in order to overcome the last obstacles to the completion of the chemical weapons convention.

While the work to eliminate the chemical threat has yet to be completed, bacteriological weapons are already outlawed by the 1972 Convention, and we should now consider strengthening its régime. That would be facilitated by holding a third review conference next year. The Soviet Union believes that the principal ways of enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention could include: the development of a special verification mechanism; achieving universal adherence to the Convention; confidence building and greater openness; and meeting existing concerns with regard to activities subject to the Convention.

The war unleashed by Iraq and the threats from Baghdad to resort to the most advanced and destructive weapons compel the international community to take a very serious look at the issues of conventional-arms transfers. As we have seen from experience, uncontrolled arms trade gives birth to the demons of war and makes military adventure an attractive option. It must be realized that stability in a

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post-confrontation world is impossible to maintain without limiting and reducing the sale and transfer of arms. Our position on this aspect of promoting genuine disarmament on a global scale was recently spelt out in a letter from the Foreign Minister of the USSR addressed to the Secretary-General. Reiterating its willingness to agree on both quantitative and qualitative restrictions on arms sales and transfers, the Soviet Union proposes the establishment of an appropriate United Nations data register as a first step in that direction. This would demonstrate more clearly potential applications of the principle of defence sufficiency and would set the stage for reductions in excessive international flows of weapons as a matter of high priority.

The Conference on Disarmament cannot stay out of efforts to solve this problem. That negotiating forum must, we believe, urgently address the issue of the arms trade and present its recommendations to the General Assembly at its next session.

Vigorous action should be taken also to limit the use of scientific and technological achievements for military purposes. Delays in this area could make arms control agreements ineffective as new breakthroughs are made in the field of weapons technology. Arms reductions must go hand in hand with constraints on the development of advanced weapons systems. The sooner this imperative is translated into practical deeds, the more confidence we shall have that the process of demilitarization will never be reversed.

Measures to curb the qualitative arms race could begin with steps to increase predictability in the development of military technology. With this in mind, it might be useful to consider instituting an exchange of information on current and planned weapons research. Parallel to that, there is a need for an in-depth expert study of the international legal aspects of the problem, aimed in the first place

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at drawing a clear-cut distinction between legitimate modernization and a qualitative arms race. We propose that the United Nations discuss the possibilities for setting up an international mechanism to prevent the proliferation of advanced weapons systems and technologies.

Simultaneous collective efforts are needed to ensure that modern science and technology are used to strengthen rather than erode international security and to promote global development through all-round mutually enriching co-operation. We are encouraged to see the relationship between international security and progress in science and technology becoming part of United Nations activities. Substantive discussions of this issue were held last April in Sendai, Japan, at the United Nations international seminar on science and technology. They demonstrated the significant potential for the application of the latest technologies to solving a number of complex disarmament problems related, among other things, to verification and conversion. We hope those important discussions, begun at Sendai, will continue, specifically at the current session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Disarmament cannot become truly global as long as it does not relate also to naval armaments. We firmly believe that the principles of reasonable sufficiency and the strengthening of stability, elimination of capabilities for surprise attack and offensive action, effective verification and mutual transparency, which have already proven their effectiveness in Europe, should also be applied to naval issues. The Soviet Union reiterates its proposal for a multilateral meeting sponsored by the United Nations to be attended by military experts from the major naval Powers and other interested States, focusing primarily on naval confidence-building measures. The same subject should, in our view, be at the centre of the discussion of naval issues within the Disarmament Commission.

We support the proposal of the Nordic group of countries for the development of international safety standards for nuclear-power plants on maritime vessels.

By adopting, a year ago, a resolution on conversion of military resources, the United Nations General Assembly initiated a dialogue on a subject that will no doubt attract priority attention in international diplomacy in the next few years. A very thorough and productive exchange on the early-stage approaches to the task of converting defence industries to civilian purposes was held during a United Nations conference in Moscow. The discussions have again demonstrated that there is a need to fully activate the United Nations potential in comparing conversion scenarios and jointly developing optimized conversion patterns. We support the proposal made yesterday by the representative of Sweden, Ms. Theorin, that the United Nations undertake a study on ways and means of converting the defence industry to environmentally clean production.

A comprehensive study on conversion could be prepared and a decision taken to include that problem or some of its aspects in the agenda of the Disarmament Commission. As a first step, the social and economic effects of disarmament could be explored. I take this opportunity to congratulate staff members of the United

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Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) on the Institute's tenth anniversary, as well as its sponsors and the scholars who contribute to its work. I also wish to inform the Committee that, to mark the occasion, an international conference on the evolution of United Nations activities in the field of disarmament and security will take place in Moscow early in December. We invite participation in that conference.

Predictability and transparency in military activities are emerging as a major new factor of stability and overall military security during the future transition to a balance of armaments at lower levels. Getting down to practical disarmament and consolidating new relationships that would come to supersede deterrence based on force would be difficult in the absence of information on military capabilities and without openness in the military field as a whole.

The Soviet Union has resolutely embarked on a course of broader glasnost in military affairs. Data on the numerical strength and main types of armaments of the Soviet armed forces have been made public and circulated in the United Nations and elsewhere. At the current session of the General Assembly, the figures on Soviet military expenditures have been submitted in accordance with the United Nations standardized international reporting system. We hope the Secretariat will circulate those data, which we transmitted to it on Friday, to the members of the Committee in the near future.

In order for transparency in the military field to become a universal norm of international life, we propose that measures taken to promote openness under United Nations auspices include provision to the United Nations on a voluntary basis of annual national data on the numerical strength of armed forces, both overall and broken down by main service, that is, land forces, air forces, naval forces, and so on; on the main types of armaments - tanks, armoured vehicles, artillery, combat aircraft and helicopters, major surface ships, including amphibious ships, and

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submarines; on the numbers of troops stationed outside national territories; and, for nuclear-weapon States, also on their launchers of intercontinental ballistic missiles and sea-launched ballistic missiles, heavy bombers and land-based tactical nuclear missiles. The measures should also include voluntary provision by States of annual data on military expenditures to the United Nations standardized data reporting system, and increasing predictability in the development of the armed forces of United Nations Member States through openness of their military budgets.

While we concentrate all our energy and will on the practical tasks of the present day, let us not forget the day to come. In his own time, the great Leonardo da Vinci said that whatever tomorrow may be, it is born today. Globalized disarmament, coupled with all-embracing transparency, can enable the world community to receive timely warning of potential threats to security and stability and, more important, to neutralize them.

The businesslike atmosphere of this session and the commitment of our Organization to achieving results give us solid reasons to expect that in the near future the First Committee will not just be working to enhance a new model of world security, but will also be formulating preventive strategies for the survival of humanity and the strengthening of peace. Today, all States are called upon to demonstrate realism, political courage and determination.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): It is a great pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee of the General Assembly. Under your dynamic leadership, the prospects for a successful session are promising. For the Netherlands delegation, there is also an element of good-neighbourliness involved, what with our having the privilege of sitting year after year at the side of the delegation of the Kingdom of Nepal. The good wishes and congratulations of my delegation go also to the other officers of the Committee.

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

I take this opportunity also to present the cordial congratulations of my delegation to the Head of the Soviet delegation, Vice-Minister Petrovsky, to whose statement I have just listened with great interest, for the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

In his statement on behalf of the twelve member States of the European Community, the representative of Italy eloquently expressed our views on this year's peace and security agenda. I will therefore highlight only a few aspects which, in the current international situation, are of particular importance to my Government.

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

The First Committee is meeting this year under an unprecedented - and, at times, daunting - constellation of international events. In the apt words of the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization:

> "we see the dawn of a new era in Europe, streaks of light in some regions and the darkness of old animosities and new hatreds enveloping others. (A/45/1, p. 3)

If we are to take the full measure of these new developments, as I believe we should, our work in the First Committee may not boil down to business as usual this time. Instead, we clearly ought to review our work and allocate our efforts in such a way that our draft resolutions will adequately reflect a new and shared sense of priorities born out of contradictory trends, such as the ending of the cold war in Europe and beyond, on the one hand, and the deadly dangers facing all of us in the Gulf, on the other.

Drawing upon the accumulated wisdom and experience of this body, I trust that we will be able to translate the manifold and far-reaching implications of the new international situation into a number of guiding themes, the urgency of which is clear to us all. I am referring to the deep and widespread anxiety caused by the dangers of unabated proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. My country is deeply committed to combating vigorously those creeping dangers.

It is self-evident that the negotiations in Geneva on a total, world-wide and effectively verifiable ban on the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons should be concluded without delay - that is, during the 1991 session of the Conference on Disarmament. With all respect given where it is due, the international community as a whole can no longer afford to postpone the attainment of that goal. Urgency must no longer be a hollow phrase, and deadlines should not be skirted. It is high time to remove the last remaining obstacles.

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

The Netherlands will exert every effort to that end. This session of the General Assembly should assist our common endeavours by accepting a consensus resolution on this issue. A ministerial meeting, if properly prepared and mandated, could be of great value in pushing us in the right direction. In any event, a convention should be concluded at the latest in 1992.

The year in which the institutions to be set up under the convention will have to be prepared for is 1991. Members of the Committee are all aware that the Netherlands wholeheartedly welcomes the Chemical Weapons Treaty Organization on its soil. Furthermore, the Netherlands considers it essential that, pending the entry into force of a chemical-weapons convention, the authority of the United Nations Secretary-General to investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons should be strengthened. I commend to the Committee's attention the report by the group of qualified experts on this matter submitted to the Secretary-General in August 1989. We, on our part, have proposed on several occasions that, in the event of the alleged use of chemical weapons, States accept in advance the admission to their territory of experts sent by the Secretary-General.

Biological weapons equally deserve our full attention. Let us take the future of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. It is clear, as past practice has shown, that that Convention needs to be reinforced. As a first step, we should press for universal adherence of States as full parties to the Convention, not only as an important goal in itself but also as a means to strengthen the moral norm outlawing the use and possession of biological weapons. As a second step we should make an actual start with the full and world-wide implementation of the existing confidence-building measures already agreed upon by the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of

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Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons in 1986. I realize that those measures leave much to be desired. We should therefore think of ways to improve them so that they will better serve their purpose, which is to build confidence in compliance. Finally, and with a view to the forthcoming Third Review Conference in 1991, we think it necessary at least to start considering actively the various problems and possibilities concerning a verification régime for the biological weapons Convention.

My next theme concerns nuclear non-proliferation. The Non-Proliferation Treaty has, for some 20 years now, proved itself to be an essential instrument in the fight against the spread of nuclear weapons. It is all the more regrettable therefore that, despite intensive efforts by many parties, it proved impossible to conclude the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty with the adoption of a consensus final document. However, this set-back should not obscure the fact that much was achieved, both before and during the Review Conference. Much common ground was reached that should not be lost. Looking to the future, we should prevent the Non-Proliferation Treaty's becoming hostage to one particular aspect of the nuclear-disarmament process and instead focus our common efforts on its further reinforcement and success, to the benefit of the security of us all.

The nuclear issue is many-faceted. Nuclear disarmament and nuclear testing are certainly related to nuclear non-proliferation. Their relationship, however, is not static. My Government continues to believe that a comprehensive test ban remains fully valid as an essential objective. It must, however, be approached not in isolation, but as part of the nuclear-disarmament process.

We are aware of the fact that many States attach the highest priority to the achievement of a total ban on nuclear-weapons testing, and we respect their

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

convictions on that score. There is encouragement to be taken from the fact that the actual level of nuclear-weapons tests this year is already significantly lower than in the past. We also believe that there is scope for further reductions in nuclear testing, both in number and in yield, to a minimum level, as my Minister noted in his statement in the Conference on Disarmament on 6 February of this year. That trend may well be confirmed. The conditions for radical reductions in the nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union seem favourable, with an agreement under the aegis of the strategic arms reduction talks (START) in the offing and the prospect of START II and talks on strategic nuclear forces. This cannot fail to affect our approach towards nuclear tests. Reducing nuclear tests to a minimum should be feasible, both technically and politically. We expect the United States and the Soviet Union to act upon that principle.

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

We welcome the recent consent by the United States Senate and the Supreme Soviet to ratify the Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty. We hope and expect that negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on further intermediate limitations on nuclear testing will resume soon, in conformity with their commitment of September 1987.

These developments offer a propitious background against which the Conference on Disarmament may in 1991 resume its work under agenda item 1, "Nuclear Test Ban". Progress could be made on the various substantive issues relating to verification and compliance, as well as on the structure and scope of a future nuclear-test ban. A newly established ad hoc committee could well address the various aspects of a complete verification system for a test-ban treaty consisting of various complementary means of monitoring - seismic, environmental, aerial - in conjunction with co-operative measures, and, where appropriate, on-site inspection. Such deliberations in the Ad Hoc Committee could eventually clear the way for negotiations on a nuclear-test ban. However, we do not believe that the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty Amendment Conference, which is due to take place in January 1991, could serve as a short-cut towards a comprehensive test ban. Such a ban would, after all, require a considerable amount of prior substantive work - inter alia, to put the necessary verification mechanisms in place. That having been said, the Amendment Conference should constitute a good opportunity for an open and constructive exchange of ideas on the subject. Certainly the Netherlands will make its contribution.

A special area of concern is the ongoing proliferation of missiles and missile technology, which cannot but aggravate regional instability. Together with its Benelux partners, the Netherlands recently joined the Missile Technology Control Régime. We hope that other countries will do likewise, or commit themselves in other ways to exercising restraint in their exports of sensitive technology.

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

More generally, we urgently need to take a fresh look at our policies on arms exports and transfers. Complicated as this issue may be, we must find ways to both broaden and deepen international co-operation aimed at harmonizing national policies in this respect. Only by agreeing to new and far-reaching international arrangements can we remedy the present unsatisfactory coexistence of so many conflicting national export regulations. We shall not solve this problem overnight, but let us at least make a start. In view of its universal character the United Nations seems well placed to assume a co-ordinating role. In this connection we welcome the timely suggestions made by many others, especially on compulsory registration of arms exports with the United Nations. The Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Akashi, referred to this proposal in his stimulating statement yesterday. We look forward to the report of the governmental experts on transparency in conventional-arms transfers to be presented to the General Assembly next year.

As my final theme, I should like to touch upon regional conventional disarmament. While this topic has figured on our agenda for many years, it is now coming to the forefront of our deliberations. The European experience shows that as the threat of nuclear weapons is receding, the dangers inherent in large-scale conventional war deserve our full attention in their own right. The conclusion of the most ambitious conventional-forces agreement ever negotiated on the European continent is now imminent. We believe that the significance of this agreement goes beyond the geopolitical context in which the negotiations were set. While recognizing the need for region-specific solutions to political and military conflicts, countries may wish to take into account the possibility that the substantive results expected of Vienna will facilitate the pursuit of peace and security in other regions of the world.

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

As the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs said,

"Efforts must be accelerated to reach more agreements by capitalizing on the situation brought about by positive and dramatic developments in Europe." (A/C.1/45/PV.3, p. 54-55)

As for the role of the United Nations in all this, we are encouraged by the valuable initiatives taken by the Department for Disarmament Affairs. Of course, it is up to us, as representatives of member States, to follow suit and to avail ourselves adequately of the opportunities offered.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call upon the Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency of the United States of America, Mr. Robert Lehman.

Mr. LEHMAN (United States of America): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Your fairness and effectiveness will serve the Committee well as you lead us in our discussions. We wish you success, and on behalf of the United States delegation, pledge to you our support.

A year ago, before this distinguished gathering, I said:

"For the first time in many generations, the prospects for genuine peace ... seem promising." (A/C.1/44/PV.5, p. 11)

We could not have known then how fast political change would occur, or how far-reaching it would be - in one part of the world, how quickly the light of freedom would come to so many; in others, how quickly that light would be savagely blown out.

Despite the tragedy of the recent unprovoked aggression by one sovereign State against another, we all hope that the breathtaking political changes of the last 18 months will become the foundation for a more peaceful and prosperous world. The crisis in the Gulf, however, has clearly demonstrated that positive changes are

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

neither preordained nor automatic. Ensuring a safer, more secure world will depend on what we do together to realize the goals of the United Nations Charter. It is our joint challenge; it is our joint responsibility.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

This is my message today: Nations may have different interests; they certainly have different perspectives on many issues. Yet the Governments and peoples of all nations share responsibility for building a better and safer future. And in the important work of this Committee, we all share responsibility for ensuring continued progress in arms control and disarmament in a world whose hallmark should be co-operation rather than conflict.

To meet this responsibility more nations must act. In the arms control arena, as in others, the requirements of our rapidly changing world will demand adaptation. Each of us must help in fashioning a new, broader approach to post-cold-war arms control. Arms control, after all, is not the exclusive responsibility nor the exclusive concern of the United States and the Soviet Union, of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or of the Warsaw Pact. Nor can Europe, where great progress has been made, be the only province of regional arms control. We must all accept responsibility for making the control of arms an essential element in increasing security, enhancing stability and transforming relationships from confrontation to co-operation in every region of the world.

The nations represented here must move beyond polemics suggesting that arms control is only about some other region's or country's arms but not their own. We must move beyond the illusion that until distant visions of global disarmament have been realized we need do nothing in our immediate regions.

The United States believes that practical arms-control measures should be an essential feature of the emerging security landscape, both in Europe and elsewhere around the globe. In the world of the 1990s, our greatest dangers will still include regional instability, unexpected upheaval and the risk of conflicts stemming from miscalculation and misperception or even from premeditated aggression. Any such conflicts could be dangerously exacerbated because of

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

proliferation of nuclear, chemical, biological and missile weaponry. Effective arms control can help to ensure that these dangers are reduced. For arms control to play its part, however, we must all play ours.

Meeting our arms-control responsibilities means that each of us must seriously pursue specific measures to prevent the occurrence of conflicts and to resolve disputes peacefully. It means adopting constructive and realistic positions in all forums. It means condemning and redressing, not tolerating or excusing, violations of agreements. It means applying the same high standards to all nations.

The United States has been doing its part and we are pleased to have this opportunity to review recent progress and to share our views on the full range of arms-control and security issues that are on this Committee's agenda. We will be candid and we hope that others will be equally honest.

The United States is encouraged by recent arms-control achievements and by the prospects for further accomplishments. We are prepared to continue to work vigorously, here in the First Committee and elsewhere, to promote international and regional security and stability and to achieve real progress.

Let me briefly summarize the United States views on the current world scene.

Bilaterally, the United States and the Soviet Union are actually reducing their nuclear arms. We are currently implementing the 1987 Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - by destroying intermediate-range nuclear forces missiles. The United States has completed destruction of all its shorter-range intermediate nuclear forces systems - the Pershing I-A - and is in the process of destroying its longer-range intermediate nuclear forces systems - the Pershing II and the ground-launched cruise missiles. The INF Treaty also has one of the most comprehensive verification provisions of any arms-control agreement to date, including on-site

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

inspection and other co-operative measures. That verification régime is working well.

The implementation of the INF Treaty, eliminating an entire class of United States and Soviet missiles world-wide, demonstrates United States commitment to practical and effective measures to constrain nuclear arms and to reduce or eliminate those most destabilizing components of existing nuclear arsenals. The INF Treaty is also a major step demonstrating the commitment of the United States and the Soviet Union to fulfil the objectives of Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

I am also pleased to report that Presidents Bush and Gorbachev, at their June summit in Washington, signed two important verification protocols to the threshold test-ban Treaty and peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty. These protocols involve complex techniques necessary to provide effective verification of the treaties, including direct on-site measurement of explosion yields.

With these protocols in hand, the United States Senate last month gave its advice and consent to the ratification of the threshold test-ban Treaty and peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty by a vote of 98 to 0. This is a significant accomplishment.

As we put into practice the new verification protocols, the United States will be ready to propose negotiations on possible further nuclear-testing limitations that make sense from a national security standpoint, contribute to stability, and still permit the certainty of a reliable, safe and effective deterrent.

The President is firm in his commitment to the step-by-step process and to a comprehensive test ban as a long-term objective of the United States. We are convinced, however, that as long as the United States must rely upon nuclear weapons for deterrence, we must also have a sensible test programme. The United States must test nuclear weapons to ensure that we will always meet the highest

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

safety, security and reliability standards. To do otherwise would create uncertainty about our stockpiles and could render us unable to make security, safety or survivability improvements. This would erode stability, not enhance it.

Stability will be enhanced not only by maintaining a safe and credible deterrent, but by our progress in reducing further our strategic offensive nuclear arsenals in a manner which makes the world more secure. The strategic arms reduction treaty now being negotiated will have an unprecedented impact in bringing about effectively verifiable reductions, particularly in the most threatening systems. The strategic arms reduction treaty will also represent an important step towards more stabilizing force structures.

The United States and the Soviet Union, however, will not cease to negotiate on strategic arms after the strategic arms reduction treaty is concluded; we have agreed, in principle, to pursue new talks on strategic offensive arms, and on the relationship between strategic offensive and defensive systems. In the words of the Washington summit statement by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev, the objectives of the future negotiations on strategic offensive arms

> "will be to reduce further the risk of outbreak of war, particularly nuclear war, and to ensure strategic stability, transparency and predictability through further stabilizing reductions in the strategic arsenals of both countries."

Also, the two sides agreed to continue the defence and space talks "without delay", to discuss the relationship between offensive and defensive arms and to seek an agreement to implement an appropriate relationship between strategic offensives and defences, taking into account stabilizing reductions in strategic offensive forces and development of new technologies. In the defence and space talks we will continue to impress upon the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics our desire that such a more stabilizing balance be achieved in a co-operative fashion.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

Finally, regarding United States-Soviet bilateral arms control efforts, I would note Presdient Bush's comments to the General Assembly two weeks ago regarding the United States-USSR agreement in June to destroy chemical weapons stocks. A year ago the President laid down his challenge; we and our Soviet colleagues have responsded boldly to that challenge. The new United States-USSR bilateral chemical weapons agreement calls not only for the destruction of tens of thousands of tons of chemical weapons stocks but also for the cessation of chemical weapons production, as well as for co-operation in the development of environmentally safe destruction procedures.

The agreement complements last December's exchange of chemical weapons data between Moscow and Washington authorized by the memorandum of understanding agreed to in Wyoming. Under that memorandum of understanding we have also conducted a series of very useful reciprocal visits to chemical-weapons-related sites in the Soviet Union and in the United States. Both the data exchange and the visits help us to understand better each other's programmes in order to expedite negotiations.

Despite the very positive developments produced by these bilateral agreements, we and our Soviet counterparts fully recognize that bilateral arrangements cannot be a substitute for a multilateral convention ridding the world of the horror of chemical weapons. These bilateral agreements demonstrate our commitment to eliminating this terrible scourge. What is less clear is the commitment of some others. Our bilateral agreements also demonstrate our honest effort to come to grips with the problem. How honestly some others are searching for a solution - when they threaten to use chemical weapons against the people of the Middle East and against the forces from all the nations participating in the implementation of the United Nations sanctions in the Persian Gulf - is open to question.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

The vitally important work of the Conference on Disarmament in negotiating a global ban on chemical weapons - on their development, production and stockpiling as well as on their use - sharply draws the question of how well each of us will assume his responsibilities. All the chemical weapons issues are on the table, including the tough ones of challenge inspection, universality, assistance and sanctions. Differences are real. Bringing the negotiations to a successful conclusion is certain to be a challenge. If commitment to a global ban on chemical weapons is genuine, however, differences will be resolved and negotiations will produce compromises that will permit the establishment of a global chemical weapons ban that serves all of us. I can only reiterate President Bush's injunction to the General Assembly a few weeks ago that as a world community we must act, not only to deter the use of inhumane weapons like mustard and nerve gas, but to eliminate the weapons entirely.

I want to mention two additional important multilateral arms control forums. Both will contribute significantly to the creation of a new post-cold-war order in Europe. In the last year, Europe has travelled a road marked by truly historic milestones: the crumbling of the Berlin Wall, symbolizing the beginning of the end of the division of Europe; the London summit, marking the vision of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) of the initial shape of the Europe that is to come; and the so-called two-plus-four agreement, ending the post-War division that characterized the European world as we knew it. Those are but a few of the events that have held the world spellbound.

It now seems all but certain that, drawing inspiration from these remarkable developments, negotiators in Vienna will secure in considerably less than two years what eluded us for more than 15 years in the negotiations on mutual balanced force reductions: a treaty reducing conventional forces in Europe.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

The importance of a treaty reducing the conventional forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Pact to equal levels and requiring the elimination and verified destruction of the excess weapons has not been diminished by the momentous changes in Eastern Europe. Only such a treaty can provide verified assurance that the dangers of surprise attack and of destabilizing inequalities have been put behind us once and for all. Only such a treaty can embody binding commitments ensuring that present trends towards greater stability will remain on course and unshaken.

President Bush and President Gorbachev, at their meetings in Washington and in Helsinki this summer, stressed the importance of securing an agreement on conventional forces in Europe this year. It is our hope that such an agreement will be completed so that it can be signed during a summit meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in Paris next month.

Our responsibility, however, extends further. At the London NATO summit, members committed themselves to immediate follow-on negotiations with the same membership and mandate, addressing military manpower and possibly other issues. The United States also declared its willingness to begin negotiations with the USSR on short-range nuclear forces once a treaty on conventional forces in Europe is signed.

The United States and its Atlantic allies are also actively pursuing negotiations in Vienna on confidence- and security-building measures: negotiations among all 34 States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Those talks have already produced the unprecedented seminar on military doctrine which brought together the senior military leadership of NATO, the Warsaw Pact and neutral and non-aligned States around a single table earlier this year.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

We also hope that a confidence- and security-building measures agreement will include another ground-breaking measure, one that provides a mechanism for consideration of unusual activities of a military nature. Under such a measure, any CSCE State will have the right to seek from any other State satisfactory explanations on its questions regarding suspicious, unscheduled out-of-garrison activities. Such a measure would be a major step towards the confidence- and security-building measures objectives of transparency and openness in military matters that are the basic requirements for trust, confidence and stability.

The starkly contrasting images of troops departing Europe on the one hand and of troops deploying to the Arabian peninsula on the other drive home one clear point: although we have come a long way in Europe, some other regions have hardly begun down a path towards real peace. Iraq's premeditated aggression against Kuwait, for example, and Iraq's advanced missiles, chemical weapons and nuclear technology make it impossible to ignore the need to halt the proliferation of such capabilities. Proliferation of such dangers is not the "haves versus have-nots" issue it is sometimes alleged to be. Rather, proliferation is a threat to all of us: a threat to stability and a threat to peace.

Let me turn now to a more comprehensive look at the subject of nuclear non-proliferation. We are pleased that the 1990 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference was a success. The Conference conducted a thorough review of the operation of the Treaty over the past five years. The great majority of parties at the Review Conference recognized the important contribution the Non-Proliferation Treaty makes to international peace and security. The great majority reaffirmed their commitment to the Treaty and expressed their support for its objectives.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

In their remarks in the Conference's plenary meetings, many parties committed themselves to the extension of the Treaty in 1995 and rejected conditions on its extension. For our part, we shall be seeking the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

Progress was made and general agreement was reached on some very important issues, including strong language on the need for full-scope safeguards as a condition of significant nuclear supply; tighter export controls on nuclear technology; and the need for scrupulous adherence to the obligations of the Treaty.

The Conference also reaffirmed the role of the Treaty in fostering the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, acknowledged the importance of the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in that area, and affirmed that IAEA safeguards provide assurance that States are complying with their undertakings and assist States in demonstrating this compliance.

Indeed, general agreement was reached on most of the issues dealt with at the Conference, a very significant achievement given the great importance and complexity of those issues. In all, much positive work was done at the Review Conference.

The people of the world recognize that it is a vastly safer, more secure and stable place with the non-proliferation Treaty than it would be without it. We could only be dismayed that some States tried to hold the future of the non-proliferation Treaty hostage to the separate issue of a comprehensive test ban. The United States also does not agree with the approach of those same States to amend the limited test-ban Treaty to make it a comprehensive test-ban agreement. Such tactics, in our view, ignore the real progress that has been made across the whole range of nuclear-related arms control issues, and they deflect attention from a range of other important arms control questions. They risk damaging the non-proliferation Treaty and undermining its objectives.

Among the issues raised at the non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference was that of assurances from nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear-weapon States that have undertaken commitments not to acquire or possess nuclear weapons - such as by

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

joining the non-proliferation Treaty - that they, the nuclear-weapon States, will neither use nor threaten to use nuclear weapons against them.

I take this opportunity to state again United States policy on that subject:

The United States will not use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State party to the non-proliferation Treaty or any comparable internationally binding commitment not to acquire nuclear explosive devices, except in the case of an attack on the United States, its territories or armed forces, or its allies, by such a State allied to a nuclear-weapon State or associated with a nuclear-weapon State in carrying out or sustaining the attack.

We have stood by that policy but, consistent with our well-known position, we remain willing to consider the views of others.

Even as major progress continues in negotiations between the United States and the USSR on nuclear weapons, in negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe, in strengthening the non-proliferation Treaty régime, and in the Conference on Disarmament, long-standing disputes and tensions continue to threaten the peace in some regions of the world.

The current conflict in the Middle East and the unprovoked aggression of Iraq accentuate the urgent need for us to formulate and implement meaningful measures to regulate military behaviour, to encourage productive dialogue and co-operative regional security arrangements, to limit the proliferation of weaponry, and to promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The spread of nuclear-, chemical-, and biological-weapons capabilities and missiles capable of delivering them poses a dangerous threat to international security. Those emerging challenges demand responsible responses.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

While negotiations continue in Geneva towards a global ban of chemical weapons, we need to ensure that we do not inadvertently contribute to the spread of such weapons before the convention is in place and receives universal adherence.

Yet another area where the world community must redouble its efforts is in biological weapons. A treaty banning such weapons has been in effect for many years. As next year's biological weapons Convention Review Conference approaches, we should encourage all States that have not done so to exchange the data called for in the Final Declaration of the 1986 Review Conference in order to permit or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions. That will strengthen the authority of the Convention and enhance confidence in it.

Finally, missile proliferation threatens all regions of the world. In 1987, seven countries announced a common policy to limit the proliferation of missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons. The missile technology control régime now has 12 members, and other are expected to join soon. We urge all States to adhere to the missile technology control régime guidelines in the interests of international peace and security.

The United States is ready to help promote arms control in whatever way is deemed appropriate. We have accumulated a fair amount of experience with such issues. There are no universal panaceas for the complex security concerns that arms control addresses. Any agreement must be tailored to the unique history and circumstances of a particular region. Nevertheless, the United States is convinced that realistic, practical arms control can help foster stability, and we do not have the luxury to ignore it.

The United Nations - the First Committee in particular - has a major role and important responsibilities in furthering progress on arms-control issues. We need to build upon the recent and praiseworthy achievements of the United Nations in standing up to aggression and in playing a positive and effective role in seeking a

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resolution of conflict. The strong collective reaction of the Security Council to the Iraqi attack against Kuwait bodes well for a new climate and rejuvenated role for the United Nations. I heard a commentator on the radio say recently that finally the United Nations had begun to operate as its original designers intended. That goes too far, I think - the United Nations has had many auspicious moments in its 45-year history. It has also had its shortcomings, however, when too often rhetoric has replaced responsibility. The seriousness of purpose the United Nations has demonstrated in recent weeks gives the United States great hope that those days are over.

The First Committee must approach its work with the same seriousness of purpose. Too often in the past, deliberations here have been marked by a lack of realism and by impractical calls for achieving vague goals that have little meaning in the world as it is. Our obligation to ensure a better future does not permit us the luxury of ignoring the realities of the present day. And, in our First Committee work, our delegation will also consider each draft resolution realistically and seriously, carefully weighing the merits of its substance.

We face a clear need to rationalize the work of the First Committee. Every country has the right to present draft resolutions expressing its opinion, and countries should use the First Committee as a vehicle for expressing their views. But use does not mean abuse. Our resolutions must be more relevant, realistic and responsive to genuine problems. Our time must be used more effectively and efficiently. Our efforts must become more meaningful in terms of current world realities.

The United States delegation stands ready to work with everyone to advance the process of rationalization that has already begun. We have been encouraged in our preliminary discussions of this issue, and we hope all States will join in pursuing this objective.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

As I look at the ambitious agenda before the First Committee today, I am keenly aware of the new climate that changes in the world have created and the new opportunities they have made available to this body. All here must carry through on the promise of co-operation and understanding forged by the prospect of the end of the cold war and let the new atmosphere help us rise to the challenge of the future. We cannot afford to let down our guard against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the potential for regional instability and renegade action by individual States, such as Iraq's illegal and brutal invasion of Kuwait.

(Mr. Lehman, United States)

Let me assure you, Mr. Chairman, that the United States will do its part to block aggression. The United States appreciates the effective response of virtually the entire international community, particularly as expressed through the actions of the United Nations, in the present Gulf crisis. But the job goes far beyond stopping aggressors. Our job is to construct an order that makes it impossible for aggressors to threaten peace and prosperity. Effective arms control is an essential element of that order.

At the end of this session, when each delegation evaluates the significance of the draft resolutions we adopt, let us once again recognize that action is more important than words. For the First Committee's deliberations to be meaningful for the vital issues of disarmament and arms control, all nations involved must seek to find agreement on realistic approaches and, having found that agreement, to act on it. Meeting our responsibility demands no less.

The time has come for more nations in more regions to build a better future through concrete steps towards regional stability and arms control. For our part, I can assure the Committee that the United States will use the work we do here to promote further regional and international security.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): Permit me at the outset, Sir, to convey to you the most sincere congratulations of the Austrian delegation on your election as Chairman of the First Committee at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. Your election is not only a tribute to your personal experience and skill in disarmament matters but also a compliment to your country, Nepal, which has always been committed to the noble task of disarmament. Let me in this context just recall the very fruitful regional meeting on confidence- and security-building measures in Asia which was organized in co-operation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament and the Government of Nepal and which was held at Kathmandu in January this year.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

I should also like to assure the other officers of the Committee of the Austrian delegation's full support and co-operation.

Since the last session of the General Assembly the international community has witnessed tremendous, indeed fundamental, changes on the international scene, changes we would not even have imagined, let alone foreseen, just a year ago. These changes were particularly far reaching on the European continent. The culmination of this process was certainly the unification of Germany, which was effected some two weeks ago. I should like in this context to extend a very heartfelt and cordial welcome to the delegation of Germany in our midst. Austria, which is located exactly on the former dividing line through the heart of Europe, feels that the unification of Germany, as well as the changes in our neighbouring countries Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and in Poland, with which Austria also has strong historical and cultural ties, will open the way to profound and positive changes in the security situation of Europe.

The system of confrontation is being transformed - irreversibly - into an emerging concept of confidence and close co-operation, with mutual benefit. True, there are not yet clear-cut new structures for the security of Europe. Many initiatives and ideas have been put forward and are being discussed. They point in the right direction. Thus, we are very confident that the improved political climate will soon evolve into a comprehensive system that takes into account the security interests of all its participants, for security in Europe is indivisible.

I should now like briefly to underscore the fact that the international community should take decisive advantage of the new possibilities and unforeseen opportunities resulting from the disappearance of the East-West conflict. In so far as possible we should do away with the old, confrontational items that bear the stigma of East-West tensions. We ought to concentrate on promising issues, on

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topics that are forward looking and that have good prospects for the future. Although there is evident progress in disarmament, much still remains to be done in the future, in particular in the multilateral field where all nations, big or small, can contribute their share. It is now time to move ahead. We must utilize the existing opportunities to make genuine progress in the various sectors of disarmament.

In this connection I should like to express our great satisfaction that this year the Nobel Prize Committee awarded the 1990 Peace Prize to President Gorbachev for his long-standing commitment to peace and disarmament. My delegation would like to convey its most sincere felicitations to the delegation of the USSR.

While we take satisfaction in the changes on the European continent we must not lose sight of situations in various other parts of the globe. Not all regional conflicts can be seen in an East-West context - far from it. The old antagonism between East and West was not always the reason for the situations in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and sometimes not even an element of them. It would not be useful to believe that with the end of East-West confrontation all the major crises in the world will be automatically solved. The underlying causes of most regional conflicts are very different from those of the former East-West tension. The invasion of Kuwait and its occupation and illegal annexation by Iraq have clearly shown that certain acts of aggression, certain threats to peace and security, call for solutions corresponding to the respective regional situations.

I shall dwell neither on the political ramifications of Iraq's actions nor on their impacts on international security, for they have been condemned several times by the international community. I am merely trying to identify the main points that are of interest to our disarmament discussion. I think that from the events that have occurred we should learn the following lessons:

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

First, stability is not achievable by a heavy build-up of armed forces and a stockpiling of weapons. Rather, they add to increased insecurity and violability in a given region. Therefore, we must try to establish security concepts other than those of deterrence and the so-called balance of terror, which not only are outdated but also can have results that no one wants.

Secondly, the question of arms transfers must be looked at more closely, taking into account the necessity for making a distinction between legal trade and illicit trafficking in weaponry. Although ways and means of addressing this issue still have to be carefully explored, the idea of an international register of arms sales, as well as arms production, seems very promising to us.

Thirdly, regional aspects of disarmament deserve our most careful attention. The current crisis demonstrates the close interrelation of global and regional security. Therefore, disarmament efforts have to be pursued on both the global and the regional levels, taking particular account of the interaction between the two. In our opinion it will be necessary to find adequate ways and means to address disarmament issues, especially regional ones. Certainly one cannot attempt to tackle all regional disarmament questions in the same way, by the same means or in the same forums. One must try to identify the specifics of a given region. Only if careful account is taken of them can adequate solutions be found.

Fourthly, the question of conventional disarmament and the question of disarmament with regard to weapons of mass destruction are closely interlinked. Thus, it would not be right to address such issues in an entirely separate manner. Conventional disarmament is not feasible without corresponding steps in the field of weapons of mass destruction. On the other hand, progress in the latter area promotes confidence, leads to an improved international climate and is thus also conducive to conventional disarmament.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

Fifthly, although the threats emanating from the East-West confrontation are now history, we are still a long way from achieving an entirely peaceful world. There is still a considerable number of international problems and dangers to peace and security. Therefore we must not sit back complacently. On the contrary, we have to intensify our efforts, and we must also address questions that, over the years, in the international debate on security and disarmament, were neglected.

Reverting to the agenda before the Committee, I should like, first, to comment briefly on the items concerning nuclear disarmament. In the light of the tremendous impact that the use of nuclear weapons would have on the whole world, it is quite obvious that nuclear disarmament must remain the top priority on the disarmament agenda.

The international community continues to be very satisfied with the further implementation of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - which is proceeding according to the timetable that was set. However, we should not overlook the fact that the shorter-range and intermediate-range missiles that are covered by the INF Treaty represent only a very small proportion of nuclear-weapons arsenals. That is why further nuclear-disarmament measures must be pursued.

We note with great interest and great satisfaction the efforts of the Soviet Union and of the United States to cut their respective stockpiles of strategic weapons. The world is encouraged by the ongoing solution of outstanding questions and looks forward to the signing of a strategic arms reduction treaty in the near future. Furthermore, we welcome the readiness for a second, more far-reaching, agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union, which would bring about further reductions in strategic offensive nuclear weapons. We hope that the remaining categories of nuclear arms that do not fall within the strategic arms

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reduction talks (START) régime - for example, air-launched nuclear bombs or sea-launched cruise missiles - will be covered by the second Treaty.

A year ago I expressed the conviction of the Austrian delegation that if security was possible with lower levels of shorter-range and intermediate-range nuclear missiles and with decreasing levels of strategic weapons it should be possible also with lower levels of tactical nuclear arms and, furthermore, that the question of a possible reduction of such weapons should be explored - in particular, in the light of the changes in Europe. We are particularly pleased at the new thinking on the part of the super-Powers and their allies with regard to tactical weapons - especially the announcement of the possible withdrawal of such weapons from European soil. In our opinion, a steadily decreasing level of nuclear armaments, of whatever kind, would enhance confidence and avoid the danger of miscalculation and, therefore, contribute to a better security situation.

The question of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban will be one of the most interesting items on our agenda. Let me recall, in this context, that Austria has always advocated a comprehensive test ban, as only such a measure would constitute a guarantee against the production, construction or further refinement of nuclear weapons. An effective test ban would be a most valuable instrument in efforts to achieve genuine nuclear disarmament. In 1987 my Government made a public appeal to the Soviet Union and the United States for an immediate stop to nuclear testing, and it called for an early start to negotiations aimed at a comprehensive test ban. We are pleased to note that, since then, the super-Powers have successfully finalized the verification protocols to the 1974 threshold test-ban Treaty and the 1976 peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty.

On the other hand, other attempts are being made to achieve a comprehensive test ban. The re-establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee within the Conference on Disarmament in July this year was an encouraging sign. We hope that agreement on a

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negotiating mandate for this body will be reached very soon. Taking into account the excellent work of the group of seismological experts - particularly in preparing test phase III for next year - we support the establishment of a connection between this group and the Ad Hoc Committee.

Other countries have proposed that the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty be amended to make it comprehensive. Following the preparatory meeting earlier this year, the amendment Conference will take place in January 1991. Owing to its long-standing commitment to a universal test ban, Austria will participate in a constructive and flexible manner.

Last month the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons took place in Geneva. With regard to implementation, we note that, to a large extent, most of the objectives of the Treaty have been met. However, a considerable number of States remain outside the Treaty. Most probably the reason for this is that the Treaty is discriminatory in that it does not distinguish between States that possess nuclear arms and States that do not - between the haves and the have-nots, so to speak. On the other hand, one must not overlook the fact that this régime is aimed at avoiding the spread of nuclear weapons and, hence, the creation or aggravation of tensions. Therefore, we note with particular regret that the parties to the Fourth Review Conference were not in a position to agree on a final document.

Since Austria regards the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a useful instrument, we sincerely hope that the difficulties can be overcome soon and that the States parties - on the basis of established common positions - will find a durable compromise with regard to their task in 1995.

The earliest possible conclusion, within the Conference on Disarmament, of a convention on the production, stockpiling and destruction of chemical weapons is a matter of the utmost importance to the international community.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

We note with satisfaction the progress that has been achieved in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons in the course of the past year - particularly in respect of such matters as old chemical weapons, jurisdiction and control, verification and the alleged use of chemical weapons - thereby bringing the convention closer to completion.

The discussion is now focusing on the core issues of the future régime, which are, of course, of a very delicate nature and complicated to tackle. Nevertheless, we hope that agreement on the outstanding issues will be achieved very soon. We support the idea of a meeting at ministerial level to solve the political questions in connection with the convention. Austria thinks that such a meeting could provide a new impetus and thus speed up the negotiations.

It should then be possible to present the final, adopted text to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. It goes without saying that the convention, once completed, must attract universal adherence. Ratification by only a limited number of countries would jeopardize the goal that the international community is trying to achieve and would be a regrettable set-back for the multilateral disarmament process.

Austria has always been fully cognizant of the great importance of the future convention and, even as a non-member of the Conference on Disarmament, has always tried to co-operate in an active and creative manner and to provide constructive impulses to the negotiations. In this context let me recall that the Austrian Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his statement at the Conference on Disarmament on 6 February 1990, officially submitted Austria's detailed offer to host, in Vienna, the proposed organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons. We certainly hope that this offer will be regarded as a propitious and promising one and that it will therefore be supported by the international community.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

Austria is encouraged by the success reached at the super-Powers' bilateral talks on chemical weapons. In June the Soviet Union and the United States signed a very important agreement to stop production and to destroy a considerable proportion of their stockpiles within the foreseeable future. We appreciate also their efforts to achieve, by the end of this year, a common document on inspection formalities and to visit each other's destruction facilities. These endeavours, together with the encouraging statements by President Bush and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze at this General Assembly session, will certainly provide a decisive impetus for the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament.

Austria had the honour, in 1986, to preside at the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. Since then, in the First Committee, we have always submitted the relevant draft resolution on biological weapons, and we shall do likewise this year. Intensive discussions with interested delegations have already begun. We are committed to strengthening the Convention further and are convinced that the Third Review Conference, which will take place in 1991, must explore ways and means of introducing a verification element into the bacteriological-weapons régime. The exchange of relevant data is a very important confidence-building measure. We call upon all countries that do not yet participate to do so in the future.

Given Austria's interest in chemical and biological weapons, my delegation will elaborate further on these matters at a later stage of our discussion.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

As I said earlier, reductions of weapons of mass destruction and conventional disarmament are closely interrelated. Therefore, Austria has, like many other countries, always paid high attention to the question of conventional disarmament. We remain convinced that this field should be looked at more closely in the various international forums, in particular within the United Nations framework. Concentration on only one segment of disarmament would, in the long run, not lead to substantial results because the task of arms reduction is basically a comprehensive one. We note with deep appreciation that at this year's substantive session the Disarmament Commission was able to adopt a set of principles on conventional disarmament.

Austria is honoured to be the host country for the twofold sets of negotiations that are taking place in Vienna, within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE).

The talks on conventional forces in Europe, the so-called CFE talks, are now in the final phase before the CSCE summit. The 22 participating States hope that the final agreement on decisive reductions of conventional weapons will be reached within the next few weeks. The CFE agreement would fundamentally improve the situation of security in Europe since it would drastically reduce the categories of conventional weapons that could be used for offensive operations. Of course the reductions will be verifiable. In this context we note with particular appreciation the compromise achieved recently at the meeting of Secretary of State Baker and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. We are confident that the remaining questions will be solved within the next few weeks. Security in Europe will be further enhanced by the additional unilateral and bilateral disarmament steps on the part of various States - steps which we whole-heartedly welcome.

We expect that the aforesaid CFE agreement will be formally signed immediately before the beginning of the Paris summit meeting, which is foreseen for 19 to

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

21 November. In this context, my delegation would like to express its gratitude to the United States of America for having organized in an excellent manner the recent ministerial meeting of the CSCE in New York, the task of which was the preparation of the Paris summit.

We welcome the readiness of all States participating in the CFE talks to conduct new disarmament and security negotiations after the 1992 Helsinki meeting, within the framework of all the States participating in the CSCE.

In the parallel negotiations that are taking place in Vienna, the 34 nations are dealing with further confidence- and security-building measures. Their task is to build upon and expand the results already achieved in the 1986 Stockholm Document with the aim of elaborating and adopting a new set of mutually complementary confidence- and security-building measures designed to reduce further the risk of military confrontation in Europe. In the opinion of Austria, an agreement on those measures would be a splendid addition to the CFE text. We would like to call upon all participating States to attempt to overcome the still existing differences so that a new document on confidence- and security-building measures could also be adopted at the Paris summit.

I should like to add that, at the recent New York ministerial meeting the question of the future institutionalization of the CSCE process was also discussed. Owing to the flexible and co-operative attitude of the delegations, considerable headway was made. The basic structures of an all-European concept of co-operative security are already emerging.

I should also like to mention that Austria is going to organize, in co-operation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, a seminar on confidence- and security-building measures in Vienna in February 1991. On that occasion, experts from the CSCE countries will meet experts from Africa, Asia and Latin America. We are confident that the discussions on confidence- and

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

security-building measures and their possible applicability in various regions will be beneficial and mutually fertilizing for us all. We are convinced that confidence- and security-building measures - provided that they correspond to the respective regional conditions - will have a positive influence on security and stability in all parts of the globe. Let me express the hope that the success achieved with regard to conventional disarmament on the European continent will provide a stimulus for disarmament efforts in other regions and at the global level.

A matter of particular concern to the Austrian delegation is the problem of the militarization of outer space. Austria has always supported all endeavours to prevent an arms race in outer space. We are disappointed that the relevant Committee of the Conference on Disarmament was unable to achieve progress and we therefore call upon all Member States to show a more flexible attitude and to increase their efforts.

Austria has always advocated the pursuance of disarmament endeavours at the universal, regional, subregional, bilateral and unilateral levels. Much has been achieved recently in bilateral and regional frameworks as well as unilaterally. Those disarmament measures have to be complemented by progress in the global field. Much to our regret, multilateral achievements lag behind others. I should like to underline once more the important role of the United Nations and its various bodies and organs in the field of disarmament. If the international community is not able to work out substantive results in the multilateral framework also, other disarmament steps will remain a patchwork. Disarmament efforts must therefore be mutually supportive and complementary in nature. Without multilateral arms control achievments it will - in the long run - not be possible to achieve genuine security and lasting peace.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

In this context we warmly welcome the set of principles regarding the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament which was adopted by consensus at the substantive sessions of the Disarmament Commission earlier this year. It is of great significance that the member States were able to establish common ground. However, we should not disguise the fact that many countries - including my own - would have liked to see stronger language and a firmer commitment to the United Nations role in disarmament.

The work of the Conference on Disarmament, in its special relationship with the United Nations system, is of the utmost importance since the Conference on Disarmament is the only multilateral negotiating body. We are disappointed that only a very limited number of the committees of the Conference on Disarmament were in a position to produce tangible results. My delegation therefore hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will also make progress in those fields where there has been a complete standstill over the last few months or even years. Although Austria is not a member State of the Conference, it is actively participating in its work. We will continue our efforts to become a member of the Conference on Disarmament in accordance with our fundamental commitment to the promotion of disarmament and international security. In this context we once again express our hope that the difficulties with regard to an enlargement of the Conference, which was decided upon already in 1982, will be settled soon. We also hope that ways and means can be found to enable non-members to contribute more satisfactorily to the work of the Conference.

Whereas the Conference on Disarmament is the negotiating forum, the Disarmament Commission is the deliberative body of the disarmament machinery. During this year's substantive session the Commission was able to finalize recommendations or sets of principles on four out of seven agenda items. This is indeed an impressive result and we would therefore like to congratulate the

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

Commission's Chairman, Ambassador Sutresna of Indonesia, and the Chairmen of the various working groups, on this historic event. The task at the next session is to deal with only four agenda items according to the reform package worked out last year. Agreement on the selection of those four items has not yet been established, although there is already considerable common ground. We are confident that the outstanding questions can be solved quickly and that the ongoing consultations will lead to acceptable results within the next few weeks. I can assure representatives that my delegation will actively and constructively participate in the relevant talks.

The First Committee itself has before it the entirety of disarmament issues. In the light of the comprehensiveness, complexity and wide range of the arms-control business, it is clear that the First Committee has to undergo a constant review of its workload and its methods of dealing with the items. Reforms must, therefore, be a steadily pursued undertaking. This year, for example, our agenda comprises 27 substantive items, several of which are split up into more than 10 sub-items. The time allotted for our deliberations must, therefore, be spent meaningfully. We ought to concentrate on those issues that would lead to multilateral progress and to specific recommendations to the Conference on Disarmament or the Disarmament Commission. Duplication of work has to be avoided. However, all reforms have to be carried out in accordance with the legitimate interests of States and groups of States; their outcome should not be to the detriment of countries which might see a particular need to address certain questions more intensively.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

My description of the disarmament machinery would be incomplete if I did not mention the United Nations Secretariat and its Department for Disarmament Affairs. I should like to pay a special tribute to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Yasushi Akashi, and his dedicated staff in the Department, for their untiring efforts to enhance the disarmament process. I should like also to commend the work of the three regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament, in Lima, Lome and Kathmandu, which play an extremely precious role in the field of regional disarmament - a very promising and future-oriented subject that should be pursued more vigorously. Let me also thank the two expert groups and their respective Chairmen, Ambassador Theorin of Sweden and Ambassador Bild of Canada, for the excellent studies recently completed on nuclear weapons and on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification.

In concluding I should like to stress once again our satisfaction at the profound changes and improvements on the international scene. These events demonstrate clearly that mankind is capable of overcoming division, separation and confrontation. It is possible to achieve increased security and to take decisive steps in disarmament. We all should take this also as an incentive for our work on the tasks to be carried out in the United Nations, and in particular here in the First Committee. Let us start now.

Ms. MASON (Canada) (interpretation from French): I wish to begin, Sir, by extending to you my warm congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. The members of the Canadian delegation are confident that your leadership will make a great contribution to what we believe will be a productive session. I assure you that you can count on Canada's full support as you carry out your important responsibilities.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

We are gathered at a time of great hope and unprecedented expectations. The cold war is over. The disarmament process between the super-Powers and in the broader East-West context is unfolding at a pace that none of us could have imagined only a few short years ago. States that for decades had viewed each other with mistrust and suspicion are now engaged in constructive dialogue and in negotiations aimed at mutually beneficial co-operation and enhanced security for all at drastically lower levels of armament.

There is, I believe, a momentum in place that, with the continued commitment of all parties, can enable us to build on the results of ongoing negotiations and thereby erect further important milestones on the road to disarmament, and to establish a genuine atmosphere of trust and co-operation between the States concerned.

Unfortunately, however, there remain difficulties and situations which impede our quest for a world whose citizens may feel secure from the threat of ruinous armed conflict. Particularly alarming is the recent brutal Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, a sovereign Member State of the United Nations. In addition to the tragic consequences of the invasion itself, this blatant disregard for the most fundamental norms of international relations seriously undermines any efforts to reverse the destructive buildup of arms and achieve a just and lasting peace in that troubled region of our planet.

There are other disturbing trends that contrast with the positive developments in East-West relations. Canada is particularly alarmed at the unabated proliferation of modern weapons and their delivery systems. The introduction of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons as well as more and more sophisticated conventional weapons into certain regions, particularly those characterized by chronic political tension, can only exacerbate regional arms races and, ultimately, threaten the future of the peoples whose interests they were intended to protect.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

In Canada's view, States in all regions where tensions persist must focus their efforts on negotiating resolutions to their differences and on seeking ways of building mutual confidence. Such a course of action offers prospects for genuine security for the peoples concerned. The acquisition of new and sophisticated weapons, on the other hand, offers only a costly arms race and increases the risk of death and destruction.

In this regard, in his statement to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly on 26 September last, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, underscored how important it was for the parties to the talks on conventional force reductions in Europe to take steps to ensure that weapons affected by that agreement did not end up as contributions to potential conflicts elsewhere in the world.

In Canada's view, if this Committee is to play its unique and irreplaceable role it must in the coming weeks take fully into account the realities, both positive and negative, to which I have referred. More specifically, my delegation would expect our deliberations appropriately to recognize the important progress currently taking place in the fields of arms control and disarmament. But, given that much remains to be done, we should also encourage the States concerned to redouble their efforts to ensure the early conclusion of even more dramatic measures. Equally, we should seek to stimulate consideration of arms control and disarmament measures in areas where substantial progress has yet to be made.

I wish briefly to explain how Canada views some recent developments in arms control and disarmament negotiations.

Canada commends the perseverance demonstrated by the United States and the Soviet Union in negotiating a treaty in the framework of the strategic arms reduction talks (START) that will substantially reduce their arsenals of strategic

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

nuclear weapons. The forthcoming signing and implementation of that treaty will represent a significant achievement in the process towards nuclear disarmament. Canada welcomes the commitment of both sides to follow up the START I treaty with negotiations on a START II treaty that would further reduce the super-Powers' nuclear arsenals.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

On nuclear testing, Canada welcomes the fact that the United States and the Soviet Union have concluded verification protocols to the 1974 and 1976 treaties, and that those two agreements will soon be ratified. While that step, in the eyes of many, was overdue, we believe that it represents an important basis upon which further restrictions on nuclear testing can be negotiated. In his statement in plenary meeting, my country's Secretary of State for External Affairs welcomed the joint American and Soviet commitment to a step-by-step approach to further restrictions on nuclear testing. He then went on to state Canada's belief that "that commitment should be followed up immediately". (A/45/PV.9, p. 28)

(spoke in English)

Parties to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty recently held their Fourth Review Conference in Geneva. As a staunch supporter of that Treaty, which we regard as a vital security instrument for the entire international community, Canada played an active role in the review and was very satisfied with the progress that was achieved, particularly in the areas of full-scope safeguards and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Despite a rigorous review of and much agreement on the disarmament aspects of the Treaty, Canada greatly regrets that no overall consensus was possible on article VI-related questions, because of differences of view over the nuclear-testing issue and its relationship to the future of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In this regard I should like to reiterate the deep concern expressed by Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs over the tendency of some States parties to threaten the continued existence of the Treaty by seeking to make its extension conditional on the achievement of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. In Mr. Clark's words to the General Assembly:

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

"It is Canada's firm view that both the Non-Proliferation Treaty and a comprehensive test-ban treaty are too important for international peace and security to be held hostage one to the other". (A/45/PV.9, p. 28)

I turn now to conventional weapons and forces. Another landmark achievement that will become reality in the very near future is the agreement to reduce drastically the current levels of conventional forces in Europe. As an active participant in the negotiation on conventional forces in Europe, Canada takes great satisfaction in the highly positive outcome of this process. We look forward to future stages of these negotiations to consider even futher reductions of conventional forces and an eventual second agreement on conventional forces in Europe. The conventional-forces-in-Europe process complements continued observation of the terms of the Stockholm Document. It will benefit further from the implementation of the next set of confidence- and security-building measures to be agreed in the ongoing negotiations in Vienna on conventional forces in Europe.

The Helsinki process, which has provided the impetus for so much good work in the area of co-operative security, as well as human rights, will take a historic step forward when the leaders of Europe, Canada and the United States meet next month in Paris to declare the end of the cold war and to celebrate the beginning of a new era of co-operation among the 34 countries of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). Canada believes that, with its unique transatlantic and pan-European membership, the CSCE can make a major contribution to the new European architecture. Thus, we would like to see the summit begin the institutionalization of the CSCE by, inter alia, establishing a secretariat, regularizing political consultations, and providing CSCE-participating States with a centre for the prevention and resolution of conflict. Such a centre could

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

support the implementation of agreed confidence- and security-building measures and play a key role in using other mechanisms - political, legal and technical - in the prevention and resolution of conflict.

Canada believes that other regions of the world characterized by high levels of armament or by tension would likewise benefit from the negotiation and implementation of confidence- and security-building measures. In this regard, we note the important role the United Nations can play, as exemplified by the recent Kathmandu meeting on the security-enhancing role of confidence- and security-building measures.

In the area of chemical weapons, efforts have been intense over the last year towards overcoming differences in order to conclude a treaty on a world-wide ban. The bilateral United States-Soviet Union agreement on chemical-weapons destruction, signed in June, represents an important achievement that gives us all encouragement that verifiable disarmament in the area of chemical weapons is possible and indeed about to begin on a bilateral level. Nevertheless, we have a long way to go towards the global elimination of chemical weapons. Negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament this year confronted challenging problems that must be overcome. Canada is convinced that, while not diminishing the complexity of the outstanding differences, a determined effort by all States involved in the negotiations can and must succeed in concluding, at the earliest possible date, a treaty acceptable to all sides.

Canada looks forward to participating actively in the consideration of the full range of items on the agenda of the Committee. I wish to comment briefly on four items of particular interest to my delegation.

Verification is an area in which Canada has a long tradition of expertise and leadership in the multilateral context. We were therefore delighted that a

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Canadian, Mr. Fred Bild, was selected to chair the Group of Qualified Governmental Experts Study on the Role of the United Nations in Verification. On behalf of Mr. Bild, I shall introduce the Final Report of that Group later this week.

In Canada's view, the Study provided an excellent opportunity to exchange views on a number of proposals concerning how the United Nations might make a contribution to the verification of arms control and disarmament agreements. We were particularly pleased that the Group succeeded in reaching a consensus Final Report that included a number of specific recommendations for further action. As indicated by the Right Honourable Joe Clark in his plenary statement, Canada plans to introduce a draft resolution on verification in the First Committee that would lay the basis for appropriate follow-up action on the consensus recommendations of the Group. In particular, the resolution will call on the United Nations to take appropriate action on the recommendations of the Group, including the establishment of a consolidated data bank of verification research material and the promotion of increased dialogue between experts and diplomats on verification issues. We therefore welcomed the remarks of Under-Secretary-General Akashi in his very useful statement yesterday as to plans already under way in the Department of Disarmament Affairs in regard to a data bank.

Jointly with Poland, the Canadian delegation will introduce in the Committee a draft resolution designed to give impetus to the Geneva negotiations on the conclusion of a comprehensive and verifiable ban on chemical weapons. As we are all aware, that negotiation is currently proceeding through a critical stage and we hope to see the General Assembly adopt a strong and unequivocal statement in support of the early conclusion by the Conference on Disarmament of a convention by providing, as in previous years, consensus approval of that resolution.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

Canada continues to attach importance to the negotiation of a verifiable agreement on the cessation and prohibition of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes at an appropriate stage in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. My delegation will again introduce a draft resolution calling for such a ban.

(Ms Mason, Canada)

Another issue that Canada will be following very closely in this Committee's work is that of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing. As the conclusion of an effective, verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty is a fundamental Canadian arms control objective, my delegation will join others in sponsoring a resolution urging steps and recommending measures that would contribute to the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

When Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs addressed the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly he spoke of co-operation as the new realism, and pragmatism as the only path to progress. The weeks ahead offer us the opportunity to capitalize on the spirit of co-operation and compromise that has allowed parties in other arms control and disarmament forums and in various negotiations to make impressive strides forward. Canada firmly believes that the First Committee has a unique and vital role to play in finding common ground and in providing direction to the international community, in both the global and regional contexts, in our collective efforts to achieve meaningful disarmament and to strengthen the security of all. We look forward to serious consideration of the agenda with a view to further advancing towards these goals.

Mr. SILOVIC (Yugoslavia): Like others, I should like to begin, Sir, by expressing my most cordial congratulations to you on your election to your important post. Your election is recognition of your exceptional diplomatic skills and profound knowledge of the United Nations, particularily of the problems of disarmament, and of friendly, non-aligned Nepal's activities and its dedication to the United Nations.

I wish also to express my congratulations to the other officers of the Committee on their election.

(Mr. Silovic, Yugoslavia)

This session of the General Assembly is being held in changed international conditions, at a time marked by the end of the cold war, when rivalry and tension between the super-Powers and their alliances are giving way to ever more intensive co-operation and dialogue between them in all areas and on all issues of international relations.

Rapprochement and the ensuing co-operation between the two super-Powers are telling proof that competition between them is now a thing of the past. It was on that competition, fraught with the ever-present danger of escalation into conflict between East and West, that the entire system of international relations had been based ever since the end of the Second World War.

The developments in United States-Soviet relations have had a positive impact world-wide, shown above all in the opening of the processes of peaceful resolution of crises in many parts of the world. These new relations between the super-Powers and the new spirit in the United Nations, particularly in the Security Council, account for the unprecedented collective action taken with respect to the extremely dangerous developments in the Gulf brought about by the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, as well as the latest, though not easily reached, consensus on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The past year will not be remembered only for the emergence of new relations between the Soviet Union and the United States: developments in Europe also left their imprint.

A symbol of the course of those developments is the unification of Germany, which has redrawn the geopolitical map of our continent. Yugoslavia, which paid a heavy price in the last war, the causes and outcome of which led to the subsequent division of Germany, welcomes the unification of this powerful nation as a harbinger of a new era in European relations.

(Mr. Silovic, Yugoslavia)

An entirely new structure is being built in Europe, one that will grow into a single political, economic and cultural entity governed by democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

These developments in international relations have given added vigour to the work of our Organization, whose importance is increasing in the present conditions, making it the central forum for reaching agreement and for co-operation in the world.

It is against this backdrop that we begin our work. I am confident that we all share a desire to see the positive trends in international relations translated into consideration of the problems of disarmament and security in the United Nations. This calls for a joint effort and the participation of all countries in the resolution of these problems, irrespective of countries' size or military might.

Over a number of years bilateral efforts to end the arms race and to achieve disarmament have been spoken of, in all forums in which they have been discussed, as being opposed to multilateral efforts. Yugoslavia has never faced such a dilemma, since we welcome every disarmament effort, whether unilateral, bilateral, regional or universal. The only yardstick by which we measure any effort is whether it is instrumental in attaining the goal we all aspire to, a world without nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, with minimum stocks of conventional arms of an exclusively defensive character, a world in which international relations and the system of security are based on the implementation of the principles of the United Nations Charter and on the progressive development of international law, which will cancel out the need for any arms.

In that context, Yugoslavia welcomed the first nuclear-disarmament steps that the super-Powers took by signing the Treaty on the Elimination of Their

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Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty. We also welcome the expected strategic arms reduction talks (START) agreements on further important reductions of strategic nuclear arms, which in our opinion would create conditions for a gradual reduction of nuclear stockpiles and their eventual destruction.

To achieve those ends, Yugoslavia, together with other non-aligned countries, will continue to call for the continuation and acceleration of the process of disarmament that has already begun and for other measures to put an end to the arms race.

The question of nuclear tests has not ceased to be a bone of contention. Ample evidence of continuing disagreement was provided at the recent Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We hope, however, that, with the signing and ratification of the agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States on the verification protocols to the 1974 and 1976 Treaties and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee in the Conference on Disarmament, conditions have been created for the commencement of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban.

In this context, as one of the countries initiating the Conference on amending the partial test-ban Treaty, Yugoslavia welcomes the convening of that Conference and expects the Treaty to be transformed into a comprehensive test-ban Treaty, on the road to which the Conference may be an important stage. After all, the very convening of the Conference is telling proof that mankind - the preponderant part of it - wants to see nuclear tests banned.

My country has always considered that the non-proliferation Treaty was instrumental in shaping the post-war security system, notwithstanding the fact that some of the States Parties to it failed to fulfil their obligations. In great

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measure it was for those reasons that it proved impossible to achieve consensus on the final document of the Fourth Review Conference, concluded recently in Geneva. Nevertheless, the Conference did show that States are in agreement on a whole range of issues of the utmost importance for the continued existence of the non-proliferation Treaty and its régime. This agreement is evident regarding general readiness to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons: early agreement on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, where differences exist with respect not to the ultimate goal, but to the pace and manner of its attainment: international co-operation on the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes: the strengthening of International Atomic Energy Agency control measures; or security guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States.

(Mr. Silovic, Yugoslavia)

My delegation believes that the remaining outstanding issues will have been resolved by 1995, when the decision on the extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is due, and that the next Review Conference will bring results that will be in the interests of all. The importance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the fact that the next Review Conference will decide on the future of the system of non-proliferation, which in turn is linked to other aspects of disarmament, make it incumbent upon us to carry out thorough and comprehensive preparations for the Conference.

In the context of the comprehensive consideration of the problem of disarmament, of priority importance is the conclusion of a convention on a global and comprehensive chemical-weapons ban. Movement in this area has been somewhat stalled, despite expectations that the agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States on the destruction and reduction of much of their chemical-weapon stockpiles would accelerate the negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament. This, we trust, is just a temporary pause before the decisive breakthrough in the acceleration of negotiations and an early harmonization of the text of the convention, which should make a significant contribution to the full elimination of these frightening weapons of mass destruction.

Yugoslavia attaches exceptional importance to concrete conventional disarmament measures and confidence-building measures. In that context, my delegation welcomes the breakthrough that has been made in the negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, which is likely to lead to the successful conclusion of the first agreement on the reduction of conventional arms in Europe, to be signed at the Paris Summit in November by 22 member States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The conclusion of the agreement, however, will not eliminate the need for further efforts. They will be needed to reduce

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conventional arms even further, without delay, with the participation of all member countries of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Although confined to Europe, the processes that have made the agreement possible have a ripple effect in themselves; they should be extended with equal vigour and political determination to include, first, the adjacent regions, such as the Mediterranean.

Yugoslavia, which has already reduced its military forces, is ready to participate in, and fully implement, all measures agreed in European negotiations on disarmament and security.

I should now like to say a few words about other multilateral disarmament negotiations.

In addition to its negotiations on a chemical-weapons ban, the Conference on Disarmament established the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. We trust that the Committee's mandate will be renewed at the next session of the Conference on Disarmament, and that it will begin to consider substantial issues related to comprehensive test bans, so that negotiations on the agreement on a comprehensive test ban may start as soon as possible. Yugoslavia and other members of the Group of 21 have always supported these negotiations. We expect that positive changes in international relations will be reflected in the work of the Conference on Disarmament on other items on its agenda, particularly those related to the complex of nuclear matters and to outer space.

I take this opportunity to welcome the results achieved at the last session of the Disarmament Commission, which, after a number of years, succeeded in adopting recommendations on a number of issues that had been on its agenda for many years.

In this context, I wish to point out the importance of the Commission's recommendations concerning the role of the United Nations in disarmament. It

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stresses, inter alia, the need to strengthen the effectiveness of the world Organization in disarmament and in the work of its bodies. Regrettably, though, the role of the United Nations in disarmament continues to lag behind its newly acquired weight in the resolution of international problems, particularly those threatening international peace and security. We trust that the strengthening of the system of collective security within the United Nations will be adequately reflected in the field of disarmament, since disarmament is not only an integral, but an essential, part of that system. Without substantial progress in disarmament, there can be no real and lasting solutions of other issues, particularly those that present an immediate threat to international peace and security.

Before I conclude my statement, let me take up an issue that unfortunately is not always in the focus of our attention, but that is certainly of vital, global importance. This problem will have to receive much more attention in the future, since international peace and security are likely to be increasingly affected in the current international political environment by non-military factors, such as social and economic development, the progress of democracy, human rights and the protection of the environment. I am speaking, of course, of the relationship between disarmament and development, which calls for urgent, resolute implementation of the Action Programme adopted at the International Conference on the Relationship between Development and Disarmament. Attention will also have to be devoted to the conversion of military potential to peacetime purposes, a question that is becoming ever more important, not only for the developing countries, but also for the developed countries.

The positive changes in international relations that I have spoken about require that we rededicate ourselves to finding a better way to conduct the

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Committee's business. Many of the issues on its agenda and the manner in which we address them are rooted in the era of bloc divisions, confrontation and the cold war. As we see that era on to the pages of the history books, we must ensure that the emerging transformations are also reflected in the First Committee's work. In the endeavour to achieve these ends, Mr. Chairman, you can count on the full co-operation of the Yugoslav delegation.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning this meeting, I should like to draw attention to document A/C.1/45/1/Add.1, which contains a letter dated 15 October 1990 from the President of the General Assembly, addressed to me, informing me that the General Assembly at its 30th plenary meeting decided to allocate agenda item 155, "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons", to the First Committee.

I suggest that, with the agreement of the Committee, this agenda item should be considered jointly with other disarmament agenda items. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee agrees with the suggestion.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.